

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/592,387

Examiner

Truc T. Chuong

Applicant(s)

ANDERSON ET AL.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to RCE filed 11/14/05.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1,2,6,7,9-12,16,17 and 19.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____. |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____. |

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT AND REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.
2. Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in this telephone interview with Attorney Mr. Mark D. Simpson on 01/20/06 and 01/23/06.
3. The claims have been amended as follows:
 1. (Currently amended) A user assistance system for providing user assistance in connection with selectable steps associated with the operation of a computer program running on a computer system, each of said selectable steps capable of being active or inactive, and each implementing one or more substeps when selected, with one of the selectable steps being a currently-selected step, said user assistance system comprising:
 - a client work area displaying information pertaining to the currently-selected step; and
 - a navigator bar adjacent to said client work area, said navigator bar continuously displaying a visual representation of said selectable steps, said visual representation including a display of steps that are active and steps that are inactive, said displayed steps comprising the most likely steps to be traversed in connection with the currently selected step;wherein said visual representation of said selectable steps displayed by said navigator bar further includes:
 - past steps already performed by said computer program; and

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the currently-selected step;

wherein said navigator bar is scrollable to allow viewing of selectable steps preceding the currently selected step, wherein the action of scrolling said navigation bar does not change the information being displayed in said client work area.

2. (Previously presented) The user assistance system of claim 1, wherein said navigator bar is dividable into segments, with each segment corresponding to one of said steps of said selectable steps.

Claims 3-5 (Canceled)

6. (Currently amended) The user assistance system of claim [[1]] 2, wherein said segments include active segments and inactive segments, and wherein selection of an active segment changes the currently-selected step to the step corresponding to said selected active segment.

7. (Original) The user assistance system of claim 6, wherein said navigator bar displays said segments in a serial manner, and wherein said navigator bar can be scrolled to allow viewing of segments preceding or following said segment corresponding to said currently-selected step.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently amended) The user assistance system of claim [[8]] 1, wherein said information displayed in said client area comprises a selectable list of alternative choices for subsequent steps to be taken by said computer program.

10. (Previously presented) The user assistance system of claim 9, wherein selection of one of said alternative choices causes said display of future steps not yet performed by said computer program to change to a display of future steps associated with said selected alternative choice.

11. (Currently amended) A method for providing user assistance in connection with selectable steps associated with the operation of a computer program running on a computer system, each of said selectable steps capable of being active or inactive, and each implementing one or more substeps when selected, with one of the selectable steps being a currently-selected step, said method comprising the steps of:

generating a client work area in which information pertaining to the currently-selected step is displayed; and

generating a navigator bar adjacent to said client work area, said navigator bar continuously displaying a visual representation of said selectable steps, said visual representation including a display of steps that are active and steps that are inactive, said displayed steps comprising the most likely steps to be traversed in connection with the currently selected step;

wherein said visual representation of said selectable steps displayed by said navigator bar further includes:

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past steps already performed by said computer program; and
the currently-selected step;
wherein said navigator bar is scrollable to allow viewing of selectable steps preceding the currently selected step, wherein the action of scrolling said navigation bar does not change the information being displayed in said client work area.

12. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of dividing said navigator bar into segments, with each segment corresponding to one of said steps of said selectable steps.

Claims 13-15 (Canceled)

16. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[11]]~~ 12, wherein said segments include active segments and inactive segments, and wherein selection of an active segment changes the currently-selected step to the step corresponding to said selected active segment.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, further comprising the steps of:
displaying said segments on said navigator bar in a serial manner; and
providing means for scrolling said navigator bar, wherein said navigator bar can be scrolled to allow viewing of segments preceding or following said segment corresponding to said currently-selected step.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[18]] 16, further comprising the step of displaying in said client area a selectable list of alternative choices for subsequent steps to be taken by said computer program.

Allowable Subject Matter

1. Claims 1-2, 6-7, 9-12, 16-17, and 19 are allowed.
2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance in combination with other claim limitations:

Independent claims 1 and 11, when considered as a whole, are allowable over the Prior Art of record. Specifically, the Prior Art of record fails to teach that the client work area displaying information pertaining to the currently-selected step, the navigator bar adjacent to the client work area, the navigator bar continuously displaying the visual representation of the selectable steps, the visual representation including the display of steps that are active and steps that are inactive, wherein the visual representation of the selectable steps displayed by the navigator bar further includes the past steps already performed by said computer program and the currently-selected step, in addition, the navigator bar is scrollable to allow viewing of selectable steps preceding the currently selected step, and wherein the action of scrolling the navigation bar does not change the information being displayed in the client work area.

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Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Truc T. Chuong whose telephone number is 571-272-4134. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th and alternate Fridays 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Weilun Lo can be reached on (571) 272-4847. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Truc T. Chuong

01/23/06



WEILUN LO
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER